



## PRESS RELEASE

### **RESEARCH SHOWS IMPROVED FERTILIZER APPLICATION INCREASES RICE AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTION**

**DHAKA, MARCH 28** – Research on deep placement of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (NPK) fertilizer briquettes shows yield increases for vegetables and rice crops when compared to the conventional broadcast application of fertilizer. The Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) presented their findings at a daylong workshop at the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC), organized by the Accelerating Agricultural Productivity Improvement (AAPI) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury attended the workshop, among others.

Key findings of the research indicated that NPK supergranule deep placement in the soil increased yields by almost 11 percent for bitter melon, 26 percent for taro and 29 percent for cucumber when compared to conventional broadcast application. For rice, yield increases ranged from 4 to 36 percent, depending on the type of rice and site. Furthermore, NPK deep placement reduced nitrogen fertilizer use by up to 38 percent for Boro rice and up to 34 percent for Aus/Aman rice. Based on the research findings, the workshop recommended promotion and expansion of NPK fertilizer briquettes in the rice and vegetable sectors in the country's south and south-western regions.

USAID through AAPI, works to improve farmer access to and use of fertilizer deep placement (FDP) technology to improve crop yields and economic returns to farmers. USAID's aim is to rapidly diffuse the FDP technology to reduce nitrogen losses, ensure less frequent use of fertilizer and increase productivity. Since the inception of the project, AAPI has promoted the use of urea deep placement or UDP, a simple yet innovative technology that involves the placement of 1-3 grams of urea super granules, also known as briquettes, in the soil. The benefits of UDP are significant: a 20 percent increase in crop yields and a 40 percent decrease in nitrogen losses. Farmers have adopted UDP technology on over 760,000 hectares of rice land and over 3,500 hectares of winter vegetables. NPK

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briquettes will provide more complete nutrition for crops compared to urea and contribute to long term soil fertility.

The five-year, \$24 million AAPI project started in 2010 and is implemented by the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC). The AAPI project is a key component of US President Barack Obama's Feed the Future initiative, channeling U.S. Government resources to address global food security issues.

*The U.S. Government, through its principal development agency the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has provided over \$6 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. In 2012, USAID provided more than \$200 million to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh. USAID supports programs in Bangladesh that: expand food security and economic opportunity, promote democratic institutions and practices, improve health and education services, and increase resiliency to climate change through adaptation and low carbon development.*

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